

HONORING CONRAD BECKER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Conrad Becker of Platte City, Missouri. Conrad is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Conrad has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Conrad has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Conrad Becker for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING RETIRING ERIE COUNTY EXECUTIVE JOEL GIAMBRA

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the public career and personal sacrifices of Joel A. Giambra, who, on December 31, 2007, concluded more than two decades of continuous elective public service with the end of his second and final term as Erie County Executive.

Joel faced challenges throughout his career, and most particularly throughout his two terms as County Executive. Hit with a cancer diagnosis before taking the oath of office as County Executive, Joel faced that challenge and many, many more with a sense of commitment and—most especially—aplomb that inspired many to heed his advice to quit smoking.

Joel and I had the pleasure—and I do mean that it was a pleasure—to serve together as members of the Buffalo Common Council. My time serving alongside Joel was brief, but we were part of a new majority caucus on the council that was thoughtful, deliberative and served as an important check and balance on the office of the Mayor.

Following Joel's service on the Common Council, he distinguished himself as Buffalo City Comptroller, administering a large department of city government charged with important day to day functions in city life.

Joel's election as County Executive in 1999 was challenging at its start and was controversial almost throughout. Joel fought the fights he believed were worth fighting and never ducked a challenge. Joel rightly brought to the forefront the issues of overlapping governmental services and the need for county and local governments in Western New York to develop new strategies to collaborate and save taxpayer dollars. While Joel's efforts certainly could not be termed a complete success, he is widely and appropriately credited for bringing these issues to the forefront, and his ef-

forts have paved the way for succeeding elected officials to find new and innovative ways to collaborate and consolidate services in the future.

As I indicated, Joel's eight years as County Executive had its share of ups and downs, but while some questioned the policies Joel implemented, no one could question his commitment to the community that he lives in and loves so much. From meetings in Albany to Washington, DC and to points abroad, during his years as County Executive, Buffalo and Western New York had no more dedicated ambassador than Joel Giambra.

Joel is now entering a new chapter of his professional life and we wish him good luck and Godspeed in his future endeavors, and Madam Speaker, I want to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to recognize Joel's public career.

TRIBUTE TO HARDIN COUNTY, TEXAS, AND ITS RESIDENTS ON THEIR 150TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Hardin County, Texas, and its residents on their 150th anniversary.

Sixty-eight miles northeast of Houston and 54 miles from the Gulf of Mexico, Hardin County's 897 square miles are covered by pine and hardwood forests. This puts Hardin County in the middle of the beautiful Big Thicket of southeast Texas and the larger east Texas Timberlands region. Natural resources are still a main driver of the local economy and timber, oil, gas, sand, gravel, and salt domes are found within the county.

In 1836 the area was split between the jurisdictions of Liberty and Jefferson counties. Following the region's population growth, in 1858 the legislature established a new county. The new county was named in honor of the Hardin family from nearby Liberty County; the county seat was also to be designated as Hardin. When the Sabine and East Texas Railroad bypassed Hardin in favor of the newly established railroad town, Kountze was made the new county seat.

Long ago, American Indians in the region began to visit what they called Medicine Lake, seeking the healing powers of the mud and mineral water in what we today call Sour Lake. Oil was discovered in 1901 around Sour Lake and quickly became the lifeblood of the area, production later reached 7 million barrels a day. This same discovery allowed for the creation of the Texas Company, better known as Texaco. Today, Hardin County has grown to over 50,000 residents.

Immigrants from Ireland, Germany, France, and other countries were drawn to Hardin County for its oil, timber, livestock and agricultural products. This rich diversity contributed to economic growth and the rich culture Hardin County still enjoys today.

Today, Hardin County is one of the fastest growing areas of southeast Texas—there is a bright future of growth and prosperity. Families are choosing to live in Hardin County because of its outstanding schools and traditional

sense of community. Hardin County is the type of place where neighbors check in on each other and catch up at high school football games. Local leaders through out the county have worked hard to maintain Hardin County's quality of life. These men and women are following in the footsteps of early settlers and the county's founders to make Hardin County a better place for hardworking men and women who call it home.

Madam Speaker, it is an honor to represent this community in the U.S. House of Representatives and I urge you to join me in congratulating Hardin County on its sesquicentennial birthday.

HONORING QUINTIN PHILLIP O'DELL

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Quintin Phillip O'Dell of Platte City, Missouri. Quintin is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Quintin has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Quintin has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Quintin Phillip O'Dell for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING RETIRING TOWN OF SARDINIA COUNCILWOMAN CARLA FULLER

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments and public service career of Carla Fuller, councilwoman from the Town of Sardinia, upon her retirement from active public service as a member of the Town Board.

Sardinia is among the smallest towns in my congressional district and sometimes, Madam Speaker, that makes for the most difficult service in public office. Because everyone in a small town seems to know everyone else, the decisions made in government often have a oversized impact upon the very people that you represent. It is that very challenge that makes the service of people like Carla Fuller all the more substantial.

Carla served as a diligent, thoughtful and respectful representative of the people during her years on the town board. While she will retire from active service on the town board at the end of this year, I have little doubt that Carla will remain dedicated to Sardinia and to its residents for many years to come.